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Inasmuch as the Official Action sets a three-month shortened statutory period which expires April 2, 2002, this Amendment is being timely filed and no extension of time is believed necessary. However, if an extension is deemed by the Patent and Trademark Office to be necessary, the same is hereby requested and the Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge any necessary fees in connection therewith or any fees necessary to preserve the pendency of this application to deposit account No. 19-0089.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 26, 27, 29, 35, 36, 47, 51, 55 and 57 as follows (a clean copy of these claims is being reproduced below and a marked-up version of the amended claims being submitted in Appendix attached at the end of this Amendment):

26. (Twice Amended) A vehicle steering head including a support tube which rotatably supports therein a fork tube to which a wheel fork and a handlebar can be secured, the steering head comprising:

a latch element disposed within the support tube, the latch element being moveable in a direction which is substantially parallel to an axis of the fork tube; and

a linkage element that is rotatable with the fork tube, the linkage element comprising at least one stop surface;

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wherein the at least one stop surface limits the rotation of the fork tube with respect to the support tube, and

wherein the latch element is connected to a slide, the slide being disposed within the support tube.

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~~27~~ (Twice Amended) A vehicle steering head including a support tube which rotatably supports therein a fork tube to which a wheel fork and a handlebar can be secured, the steering head comprising:

B1 a latch element disposed within the support tube, the latch element being moveable in a direction which is substantially parallel to an axis of the fork tube; and

a linkage element that is rotatable with the fork tube, the linkage element comprising at least one stop surface;

wherein the at least one stop surface limits the rotation of the fork tube with respect to the support tube, and

a slide that is disposed within the support tube and retains the latch element.

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~~29~~ (Twice Amended) A vehicle steering head including a support tube which rotatably supports therein a fork tube to which a wheel fork and a handlebar can be secured, the steering head comprising:

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a latch element disposed within the support tube, the latch element being moveable in a direction which is substantially parallel to an axis of the fork tube; and

B² a linkage element that is rotatable with the fork tube, the linkage element comprising at least one stop surface;

wherein the at least one stop surface limits the rotation of the fork tube with respect to the support tube, and

wherein the linkage element comprises a mudguard.

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35. (Twice Amended) The steering head of claim 26, further comprising a locking element connected to the slide.

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26. (Twice Amended) A vehicle steering head including a support tube which rotatably supports therein a fork tube to which a wheel fork and a handlebar can be secured, the steering head comprising:

a latch element disposed within the support tube, the latch element being moveable in a direction which is substantially parallel to an axis of the fork tube; and

a linkage element that is rotatable with the fork tube, the linkage element comprising at least one stop surface;

wherein the at least one stop surface limits the rotation of the fork tube with respect

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to the support tube, and

a bearing support disposed on at least one end of the support tube.

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(Amended) A vehicle steering head including a support tube and fork tube which is rotatably mounted with respect to the support tube, the steering head comprising:

an upper bearing support disposed at an upper end of the support tube;

a lower bearing support disposed at a lower end of the support tube;

the fork tube comprising a fork end and a handlebar engaging end;

a latch element projecting from the fork tube between the fork end and the handlebar engaging end, the latch element being disposed within the support tube; and

a linkage element slidable disposed within the support tube, the linkage element comprising at least one stop surface for engaging the latch element;

wherein the linkage element is moveable in a direction which is substantially parallel to an axis of the fork tube from a first position, wherein the latch element and the at least one stop cooperate to limit the rotational movement of the fork tube, to a second position where the latch element releasably engages a locking element disposed on the linkage element whereby the fork tube is prevented from rotating in any direction.

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(Twice Amended) A vehicle steering head including a support tube and fork

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tube which is rotatably mounted with respect to the support tube, the steering head comprising:

an upper bearing support disposed at an upper end of the support tube;

a lower bearing support disposed at a lower end of the support tube, the lower bearing support comprising at least one stop surface;

the fork tube comprising a fork end and a handlebar engaging end;

a latch element slidably disposed adjacent the fork tube between the fork end and the handlebar engaging end, the latch element being disposed within the support tube; and

a linkage element moveably disposed adjacent the lower support bearing, the linkage element comprising at least one stop surface for engaging the at least one stop surface of the lower bearing support and comprising a recess for receiving the latch element;

wherein the latch element is moveable in a direction which is substantially parallel to an axis of the fork tube from a first position where the latch element engages only the lower bearing support, wherein the at least one stop of the lower bearing support cooperates with the at least one stop of the linkage element to limit the rotational movement of the fork tube, to a second position where the latch element releasably engages a recess in the linkage element whereby the fork tube is prevented from rotating in any direction.

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55. (Twice Amended) The steering head of claim 51, further comprising at least

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one locking element for engaging a locking recess in the lower bearing support..

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(Twice Amended) A vehicle steering head comprising:

a fork tube adapted to engage a handlebar;

a support tube which rotatably supports the fork tube;

a latch element disposed within the support tube;

a slide which is moveable with respect to the support tube; and

a linkage element;

wherein the slide is moveable from at least one position wherein the linkage element prevents the fork tube from rotating with respect to the support tube to at least another position wherein the linkage element allows the fork tube to rotate with respect to the support tube in at least two directions, and

wherein the slide is adapted to move the latch element from outside the support tube.

Please add the following new claim:

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A vehicle steering head comprising:

a support tube adapted to be coupled to a vehicle frame;

an upper bearing support arranged at an upper end of the support tube;